



Self-Direction Information Booklet



**North Carolina Department of Health & Human Services
Division of Mental Health | Developmental Disabilities
Substance Abuse Services**

Community Alternative Program for Persons with Mental
Retardation / Developmental Disabilities Supports Waiver

MH | DD | SAS
Division of mental health | developmental disabilities | substance abuse services



In North Carolina, the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services (DMH/DD/SAS) is the agency that manages the Community Alternative Programs for individuals with Mental Retardation/Developmental Disabilities (CAP-MR/DD) at the state level. This booklet provides information about the Self-Direction option which is offered within the CAP-MR/DD Supports Waiver.

DMH/DD/SAS, together with the Division of Medical Assistance (DMA), has completed the work for a new option called Self-Direction. People, who receive services and supports in the Supports Waiver, can begin to use the Self-Direction option.

What does Self-Direction mean to you?

Within the CAP-MR/DD Supports Waiver, Self-Direction means that you:

- have more choices and freedom about where to live;
- have control over services and supports;
- decide how to spend the money approved in your person centered plan;
- will be responsible and accountable for the use of the money that pays for the services and supports;
- have support and assistance to learn skills to develop friendships with people in your community; and
- have support and assistance to become actively involved in community groups/organizations based on your interests.

People who receive services that are paid through the Supports Waiver are called participants because they are actively



participating in the Supports Waiver in a meaningful way.

What is the Supports Waiver Self-Direction option?

This option is set up to help you in managing your own services and supports to live your best life. It is about using self-direction in home life and community-based services, supports and goods that are included in an approved person centered plan and budget. Once in Self-Direction, you can direct some or all of your services.

Who can participate in the Self-Direction option?

Individuals who are receiving services through the CAP-MR/DD Supports Waiver can ask for the Self-Direction option. If a participant in the Supports Waiver is interested in the Self-Direction option, he or she can contact his or her local management entity (LME) and request a meeting to talk about this option.



Why did North Carolina decide to offer this option?

This option is being offered because it is a proven best practice approach to providing services/supports to people. By offering this option, North Carolina believes that people in the Supports Waiver will:

- have more freedom to choose where to live, work and learn;
- design and direct their person centered plans; and,
- select and receive services and supports at home and in their communities that they want and need.



Is Self-Direction right for you?

Each participant needs to make that decision for him or herself. There are people that can provide help in talking about what Self-Direction might mean in your life. These people might be family members, friends, case manager and staff – anyone you trust and you feel knows you well.

It is very important that all the good things about Self-Direction are talked about. It is also important that all the responsibilities of choosing to self-direct are also explained and understood.

How is the Self-Direction option different from the traditional waiver programs?

There are five big differences:

- You can get services and supports that are not available in other Medicaid programs.
- You will decide what services and support you need.
- You will have more freedom and control over your services and supports.
- You will have opportunities to become active in your community (groups and organizations).
- You will decide what your employees do and how much to pay them. (Within State and Federal guidelines)
- You can pick any of the services from the list available in the Self-Direction option and the Supports Waiver as long as the cost is within your budget.

Can a person who has a legal guardian choose to self-direct?

Yes, you can choose to self-direct if you have a legal guardian. The legal guardian can be part of the team that supports you in developing your plan and your budget and can assist you with making decisions. The way and amount of involvement

your legal guardian has is between you and your guardian. You can offer your guardian and other important people in your life responsibilities to participate in supporting you to self-direct. Your guardian's responsibilities continue as previously decided by the court.

Is more information available to you about this option?

If you choose the Self-Direction option you must go through training that will teach important information about all the responsibilities.

The training will teach you about all the responsibilities including learning how the services and staff that you select will be paid.



Will I have support?

You will also have help from a Community Resource Consultant. A Community Resource Consultant is someone you choose and will also be trained about all the responsibilities. After completing the training, the Community Resource Consultant can train, assist and support you with your decisions regarding:

- What services, supports and goods you need.
- When you need the services and supports to be provided.
- Who provides those services and supports.
- Where the services and supports are provided.
- How the services and supports are provided.
- Hiring and managing employees.



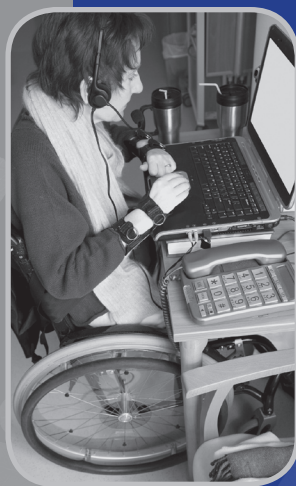
How does this get started?

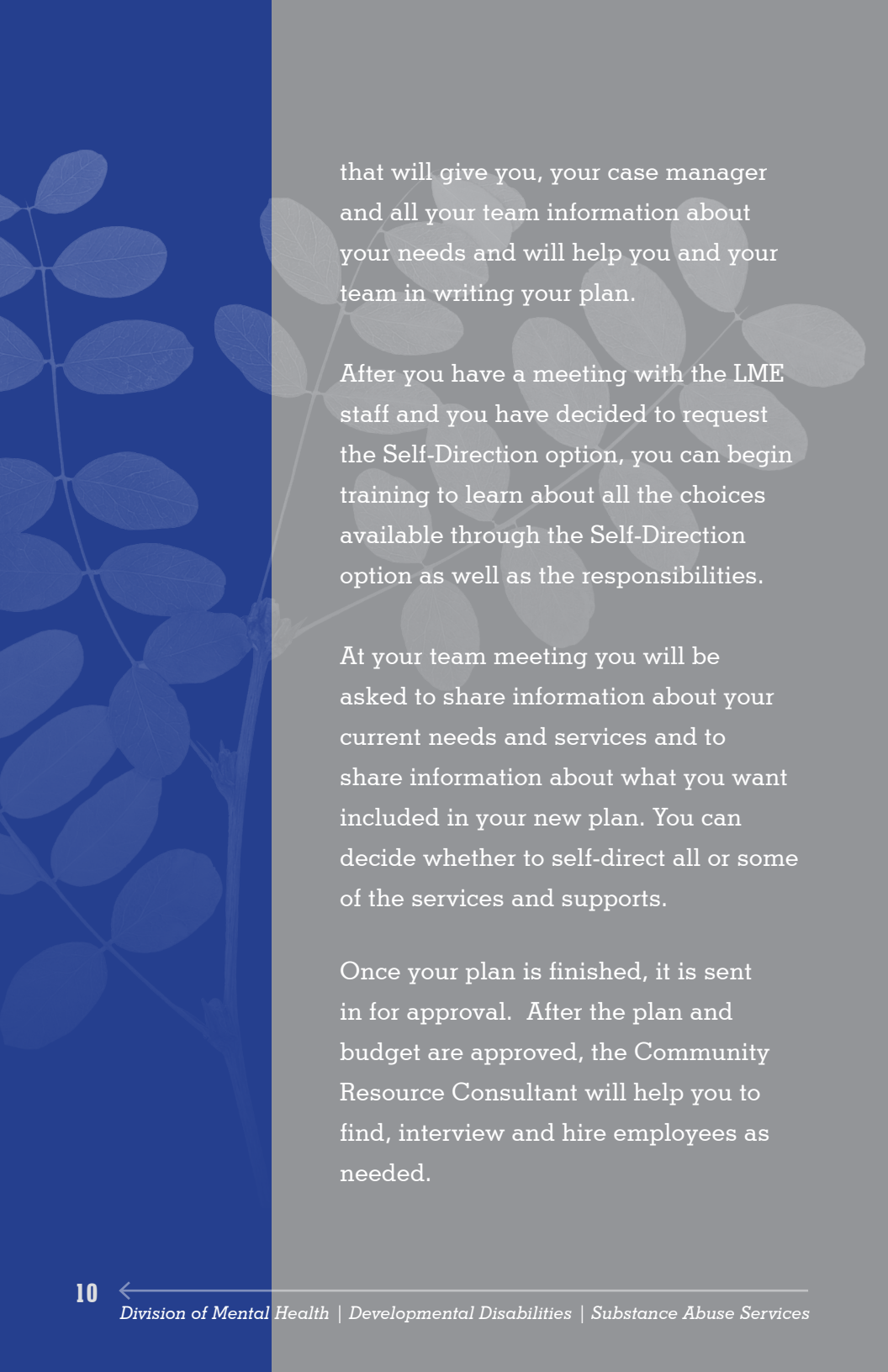
If you are a participant in the Supports Waiver and are interested, let your LME know.

The staff at the LME should help you schedule a meeting to talk about the Self-Direction option. This meeting might include others that you trust and want to be involved. You will also want to think about who you want to select as your Community Resource Consultant.

The case manager will assist you to update your person centered plan (plan). This is also a good time to think about the help you receive from your family, friends and others and what already works in your life. Think about what you need that you are not getting through other ways.

The LME will also share information about the Supports Intensity Scale. It is recommended that you have a Supports Intensity Scale completed. This is a tool





that will give you, your case manager and all your team information about your needs and will help you and your team in writing your plan.

After you have a meeting with the LME staff and you have decided to request the Self-Direction option, you can begin training to learn about all the choices available through the Self-Direction option as well as the responsibilities.

At your team meeting you will be asked to share information about your current needs and services and to share information about what you want included in your new plan. You can decide whether to self-direct all or some of the services and supports.

Once your plan is finished, it is sent in for approval. After the plan and budget are approved, the Community Resource Consultant will help you to find, interview and hire employees as needed.

How is the money handled for paying for services and supports?

After your person centered plan and budget are approved, information is shared with an agency called the Financial Management Service. The Financial Management Service agency has the responsibility of working with you to:

- complete background checks for applicants that you are interested in hiring;
- complete the payroll to pay the employees; and,
- make sure the insurance requirements are met regarding employing any employees on your behalf and as directed by you.

If you decide to only self-direct some of the services and use a traditional provider agency for some services, the chosen traditional provider will bill for services they provide.



What can be purchased through the Self-Directed option?

The cost for the assistance you receive from your Community Resource Consultant and the Financial Management Service does not come out of your budget included in your person centered plan.

The cost for the services you choose to use from the list below would be included in your budget in your person centered plan.

Here are the services that you can choose from to include in your person centered plan.

Based on your individual needs, these are the possible services that you can self-direct:

- Personal Care
- Respite Services
- Transportation



- Participant/Natural Support
- Training and Education Services
- Home and Community Support Services
- Individual Goods and Services

These are the services that you can choose to receive from a traditional provider:

- Augmentative Communication
- Home Modifications
- Specialized Equipment and Supplies
- Personal Emergency Response System
- Vehicle Adaptations
- Adult Day Health
- Day Supports
- Long Term Vocational Support
- Specialized Consultative Services
- Crisis Respite



- Crisis Services
- Behavioral Consultation
- Supportive Employment

How much money is available to pay for services?

The maximum amount of funding is \$17,500 per person per year. The amount is approved based on the information provided in your person centered plan. This budget includes cost of all services (the services you self-direct and those you get from traditional providers.)

Remember, the cost of your Community Resource Consultant and Financial Management Service does not come out of your budget.

How is this a better way of using money to pay for services?

- You will be able to buy things that cost less or are a better value.
- You will not have to pay for services you do not want.
- You will have help to find and use community services that are available to all people living in your community.

- You will direct your own services so there is not a cost for a provider to do this service as part of their business.
- You will be supported in becoming active in community group/organizations.

What are the responsibilities of the participant who wants to self-direct?

Here are some of the responsibilities:

- You are required to work cooperatively with the Community Resource Consultant and the Financial Management Service Agency.
- You are in charge of your plan and budget.
- You go through all the training.
- You need to find people you want to hire as employees with support from your Community Resource Consultant.
- You decide whom to hire and what to pay them within state and federal guidelines.



- You make sure your employees are trained.
- You make sure you are following your budget.
- You let someone know when you need help.
- You report monthly on how things are going for you.

How does a person transition into the Self-Direction option?

When you choose the Self-Direction option, the current services will continue until the new person centered plan and budget is approved. The case manager will work with you to make sure services and support you need do not stop as you begin your new self-directed lifestyle.

What happens if the participant changes his/her mind after being approved to self-direct?

If you decide that you do not want to self-direct at any time your case manager can help you receive services through a traditional provider.

The case manager will work with you to make sure services and support you need do not stop as you leave self-directed services and supports to traditional provider led services and supports.

There may be other reasons that you may be assisted to use traditional provider lead services instead of self-directed services. Two of those reasons will be when the approved budget and/or person centered plan are not followed.

New Words to Learn

Community Resource Consultant or CRC:

The Community Resource Consultant (or CRC) is a person selected by the participant. The CRC guides and supports rather than directs and manages. The CRC is there to support the participant to learn about the services and how to direct them.

Specifically, the CRC will:

- Help the participant in the responsibilities of being an employer, such as; being aware of how much to pay staff (how much staff will cost) and deciding whether the cost fits into the approved budget in the person centered plan as well as State and Federal guidelines.



- Help the participant by providing information on how to find, interview and hire employees.
- Help the participant provide individualized training to employees, schedule employees, approve timesheets and complete employee evaluations. The CRC will also help if the participant decides to terminate an employee.
- Support the participant to explore all the service/support options especially options that are not typically used by people with disabilities.
- Support the participant to get involved with desired supports that the participant can receive without paying to use.
- Help by instructing and counseling the participant in thinking about possible solutions to any problems and being an advocate for the participant.
- Work together with other members of the team.
- Help in using any approach to gather information to help write the person centered plan.
- Support the participant with becoming actively involved in their community.

The CRC will also help when the participant decides to use a traditional provider for some of the services. The cost of the CRC will not come out of the participant's budget.

Financial Management Service or FMS:

The Financial Management Service agency (FMS) will set up and keep an account for the participant's budget. The FMS will make sure to pay only the amount of money that is owed for the service that is provided. The FMS will keep track of how much of each service is provided and how much is left in the participant's budget that has not been spent yet. The FMS will give the participant a report showing how much has been paid out of the budget and how much the participant has left. A copy of this report will also be given to the participant's legally responsible person, case manager and CRC.

The FMS works with the participant to ensure potential employees are qualified and meet all the requirements to provide services.

The FMS will also help when the participant decides to use a traditional provider for some of the services.

The cost of the FMS will not come out of the participant's budget.

Specifically, the FMS will:

- Check each potential employee work, criminal and driving history.
- Check to make sure the potential employee has a driver's license if they are going to be driving when working.
- Use the staff timesheets to pay the employee and make sure that taxes and insurance are paid.
- Provide reports about the participant's budget to the participant, legally responsible person, case manager and CRC.
- Contact the participant, legally responsible person and the case manager any time the cost of the services are more than what is approved in the budget.
- Take care of all the legal requirements related to hiring and paying employees.

Is the Self-Direction Option right for YOU?

For more information to help you decide:

- Contact your local management entity to ask for a meeting.
- You can also visit the NC Division of MH-DD-SAS website at <http://www.ncdhhs.gov/mhddsas/> for information.

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State of North Carolina, Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor
Department of Health and Human Services, Lanier M. Cansler, Secretary
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Substance Abuse Services, Leza Wainwright, Director



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